GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HOME AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:9
ANSWERED ON:18.02.2003
FOREIGN VISIT BY DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY;M.V.V.S MURTHI

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether he has visited Singapore, France, Qatar, Thailand and other countries and held discussions with his counterparts there recently;

(b) if so, the details of the discussions held with the respective countries alongwith details of the agreements signed;

(c) whether France, Qatar and Thailand have agreed to provide any help to India to fight War against Terrorism;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether any extradition treaty has also been signed during the visit; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERS(PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI HARIN PATHAK)

(a): Yes, Sir. The Deputy Prime Minister recently visited Qatar and France (from 20th January, 2003 to 25th January, 2003) as well as Thailand and Singapore (from 30th January to 5th February, 2003) to hold discussions with the leaders of these countries.

(b): Details of the discussions held with the respective countries, as well as the agreement signed during the visit, are enclosed as Annexure-`A`.

(c) & (d): There is a broad agreement, in principle, to have close cooperation with all the three countries in the War against Terrorism. There is already a Joint Working Group with France to combat terrorism/security cooperation.Action to form a Joint Working Group with Thailand and Qatar has been initiated.

(e) & (f): An Extradition Treaty has been signed with France during the visit to France.Some salient features relating to the Treaty are enclosed as Annexure-`B`.

Annexure - `A`
Deputy Prime Minister`s visit to Qatar & France (20th January to 25th January, 2003)

Deputy Prime Minister Shri L.K. Advani accompanied by an official level delegation (OSD to Dy. P.M., PS to Dy.P.M., Specia Director, IB, JS(PP), MHA, JS(EWC), MEA and JS(Gulf) MEA)visited Qatar and held discussions with the authorities in Qatar (21st and 22nd January, 2003.

During his visit, Deputy Prime Minister met HH Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Emir of State of Qatar, HH Sheikh Mohamma Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Deputy Prime Minister, HH Sheikh Hamad Bin Jassim Bin Jabor Al-Thani, Foreign Minister of the State of Qata and HE Abdullah Bin Hamad Al-Attiyah, Minister of Energy & Industry and discussed various issues concerning Indo-Qatar bilateral relations and highlighted India`s security concerns.

From Qatar the delegation went to France on 22nd January, 2003.During their stay in Paris from 22nd to 25th January, 2003 the Deputy Prime Minister held discussions with the French authorities relating to Indo-French bilateral cooperation, Indo-French Extradition Treaty was signed by Dy.P.M. on 24.01.2003. During his stay in Paris the Dy.P.M. met the French Prime Minister Mr. Jean Pierre Raffarin, Interior Minister Mr. Nicolas Sarkozy Minister for Justice Mr. Dominique Perben, Transport Minister Mr. Gilles de Robien, and Defence Minister Mme. Michele Alliot Marlei.

Deputy Prime Minister`s visit to Thailand/Singapore (30th January, 2003 to 5th February, 2003)

The Deputy Prime Minister, Shri L.K. Advani, accompanied by an official delegation (Union Home Secretary, OSD to Dy.P.M., PS to Dy.P.M., JS(SEA), MEA, Director (PP), MHA) visited Thailand and held discussions with the authorities in Thailand on 31st and 1s February, 2003.

During the visit, the Deputy Prime Minister of India called on H.E. Mr. Thaksin Shinawatra, Prime Minister of Thailand, and held a plenary meeting with Deputy Prime Minister Mr. Wissanu Krea-Ngam.Mr. Wan Muhamad Noor Matha, Minister of Interior and Mr. Purachai Piumsomboon, Minister of Justice, called on the DPM.

A full and detailed review of bilateral relations was conducted including views on security cooperation, especially with respect to terrorist activities that threaten the stability of the region. It was agreed that the meeting of the Thailand-India Joint Working Group on Security would take place expeditiously. Both sides also agreed to conclude a bilateral Extradition Treaty, Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty in Criminal Matters, an Agreement on transfer of convicted prisoners, and M.O.U. on Narcotic control. Measures to diversify and enhance bilateral cooperation in the fields of Bio Technology, Space Applications, Civil Aviation, Tourism and Information Technology were also discussed.

From Thailand, the delegation visited Singapore on 2nd February, 2003.During the stay at Singapore from 2nd February 2003 to 5th February, 2003, Dy.P.M. held discussions with the President Mr. S.R. Nathan, the Prime Minister Mr. Gohchoktong, the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance Mr. Lee Hsien Loong, the Home Affairs Minister Mr. Wongkanseng andthe Minister of Trade and Industry, Mr. George Yong-Boon Yeo.

The Deputy Prime Minister delivered a lecture on `New Approaches to Security and Development` at the Institute of South East Asian Studies, Singaporeon 4th February, 2003. In his lecture, The DPM emphasized the inter-dependence between security and development and stressed upon the need for regional and global cooperation to combat terrorism. He also touched upon the problem of the Global Web of Terrorism extending to South East Asia and the problems relating to proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

The Dy.P.M. also held detailed discussions with Singapore on issues relating to Indo-Singapore Bilateral Cooperation, Trade and Industry, Science and Technology besides Security issues.

Annexure- `B`

Some salient features of the Extradition Agreement between the Republic of India and the Republic of France.

The Extradition Agreement between India and France was signed during the visit of Deputy Prime Minister to France on 24th of January 2003. Some of the salient features of the Agreement are as follows:

(i) Any person who being accused or convicted of an extraditable offence is wanted by the Requesting State, may be extradited.

(ii) The Agreement provides for no-list method and any offence punishable with imprisonment for a period of at least two years will be an extraditable offence. In the case of a convicted person, duration of sentence remaining to be served must be at least nine months for an extraditable offence.

(iii) Offences related to fiscal matters, customs duties or currency exchange will also be extraditable offences.

(iv) Extradition will not be granted if the offence for which extradition is sought is a political offence or it is connected with such an offence. It shall not affect obligation of Contracting states undertaken under international conventions of multilateral character for not considering the offences dealt there-under as political offences. Extradition will not be available if the extradition request is believed to have been made for the purpose of prosecuting or punishing a person on account of his or her race, religion, nationality or political opinion.

(v) Extradition will not be granted for such offences, which are offences under military law but are not so under ordinary criminal law. The Agreement also includes the provision for keeping other serious offences out of the purview of the political offence defence plea, such as, offences against life; physical integrity or liberty of a person; and property.

(vi) The nationals of the requested State will not be extradited provided local prosecution is ensured.

(vii) Extradition will not be granted if final judgment has already been passed by the requested State in respect of offences for which extradition is sought - or if the person sought has become immune from prosecution or sentence by lapse of time according to State, or pardon has been granted by the requesting or requested State, provided the latter was competent to prosecute in accordance with its domestic law.

Extradition may be refused if the offence committed is punishable by death penalty in the requesting state and the same is not punishable by death in the requested state unless the requesting State gives an assurance that death penalty will not be awarded or, if awarded, will not be carried out.